

I CLAIM:

1. For use on a cargo trailer having plural sidewalls and a bottom bed, wherein one of said sidewalls has an access opening, an arrangement for loading cargo on or off-loading cargo from said trailer comprising:

a transport mechanism moveably attached to a lower portion of the trailer's bed;

5 a first hydraulic cylinder attached to a lower portion of the trailer's bed and coupled to said transport mechanism for moving said transport mechanism between a retracted position and an extended position wherein said transport mechanism is located adjacent said access opening;

10 first and second pairs of angled arms each having respective first and second opposed ends, wherein the first ends of said angled arms are pivotally coupled to said transport mechanism;

a platform adapted to receive and support cargo, wherein said platform is pivotally coupled to a second end of each of said angled arms; and

15 a second hydraulic cylinder coupled to an intermediate portion of each of said angled arms for moving said platform between a folded configuration when said transport mechanism is in the retracted position for transport of the trailer and an unfolded configuration when said transport mechanism is in the extended position for using said platform to receive and support cargo, wherein said platform is raised and lowered by said second hydraulic cylinder when said transport mechanism is in the extended position.

2. The arrangement of claim 1 wherein each of said arms includes first and second end sections connected end-to-end and forming an obtuse angle.

3. The arrangement of claim 2 wherein said first and second end sections are formed of tubular steel and are connected by a weldment.

4. The arrangement of claim 2 wherein each of each arms is formed of a unitary piece of tubular steel.

5. The arrangement of claim 1 further comprising tracks attached to a lower portion to the trailer bed and engaging said transport mechanism.

6. The arrangement of claim 5 further comprising plural rollers attached to an upper portion of said transport mechanism and engaging said tracks to facilitate displacement of said transport mechanism between the retracted and extended positions.

7. The arrangement of claim 1 further comprising at least one coupling link pivotally connecting each of said first pair of angled arms to one of said second pair of angled arms to allow said first and said second pairs of arms to remain generally parallel.

8. The arrangement of claim 1 wherein said second hydraulic cylinder is pivotally connected to a central portion of said transport mechanism and to an intermediate portion of each of said first and second pairs of angled arms.

9. The arrangement of claim 1 further comprising at least one chain suspended from the cargo trailer and removably connected to said platform for maintaining the platform in the folded configuration.

10. The arrangement of claim 1 further comprising a ramp pivotally coupled to a distal end of said platform and movable between a folded position on said platform when not in use and an extended position aligned with said platform to facilitate unloading goods from said platform or loading goods onto said platform.

11. A sidelading elevator apparatus disposed adjacent an opening in a side wall of a vehicle for loading cargo onto or offloading cargo from the vehicle, said apparatus comprising:

a rail assembly disposed on a lower portion of the vehicle;

a carriage attached to and displaceable along said rail assembly;

5 a first hydraulic cylinder disposed below and mounted to the vehicle and connected to said carriage for displacing said carriage on said rail assembly between a nonuse, storage position and an extended, use position;

a generally flat platform adapted for receiving and supporting cargo and including a foldable ramp;

10 plural angled arms each having respective first and second opposed ends, wherein the first ends of said arms are pivotally coupled to said carriage and the second ends of said arms are pivotally coupled to said platform, and wherein each of said arms forms an obtuse angle;

coupling links pivotally connecting adjacent pairs of angled arms for maintaining said arms generally parallel and said platform generally horizontal; and

15 a second hydraulic cylinder coupled between said carriage and an intermediate portion of each of said angled arms for pivotally displacing said arms about said carriage and moving said platform between an elevated position adjacent the opening in the vehicle's side wall and a lowered position on or adjacent the ground when said carriage is in the extended, use position.